IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 18, 20, 23 through 26 and 31 through 36 are pending in the application. Claims1 through 17, 19, and 27 through 30 were previously canceled. Please note that all claims currently pending and under consideration in the referenced application are shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Claims 1-17 (canceled).

18. (currently amended) A method of treating morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints in a rheumatoid arthritis patient suffering from morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints, consisting of

identifying that a patient suffers from morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints and

administering to the patient that suffers from morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints a morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints treating effective amount of erythropoietin over a treatment period;

identifying that said patient that suffers from morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints, has, after said treatment period in comparison to before said treatment period, a lower level of morning stiffness, loss of grip strength, painful joints, or swollen joints.

Claim 19 (canceled)

20. (currently amended) A method of ameliorating an erythrocyte sedimentation rate or C-reactive protein level in a rheumatoid arthritis patient in need of such amelioration, consisting of

identifying that a patient is in need of such amelioration and

administering to the patient an erythrocyte sedimentation rate or C-reactive protein level activity ameliorating effective amount of erythropoietin over a period;

identifying that the erythrocyte sedimentation rate or C-reactive protein level in said patient has been ameliorated.

Claims 21-22 (canceled).

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the erythropoietin is human erythropoietin.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the erythropoietin is of recombinant origin.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the erythropoietin is human erythropoietin.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the erythropoietin is of recombinant origin.

Claims 27-30 (canceled).

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the period comprises 6 weeks of treatment.

32. (canceled)

33. (canceled)

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the treatment period is at least 3 weeks.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 20 wherein the treatment period is at least 3 weeks.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the treatment period comprises 6 weeks of treatment.